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Book Reviews.

Handbuch der alttestamentlichen Theologie. Von AUGUST DILLMANN. Aus dem Nachlass des Verfassers herausgegeben von Rudolf Kittel, Ord. Professor der Theologie in Breslau. 1895. Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel. Octavo, pp. viii+565. Price M. 11.

The manuscripts of the late Professor Dillmann include two complete sets of lectures on the theology of the Old Testament delivered at different times to his class in the University of Berlin. Those made use of in the summer semester of 1894 constitute the foundation of this work. As the author died on July 4th of that year these lectures may be safely regarded as representing his latest thoughts on this important subject. Many of his views are no doubt well known through his commentaries which have been so widely read and so profoundly influential, but students generally have never before had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the systematic teaching of this eminent scholar and thinker concerning the religion of the Old Testament as a whole. Professor Kittel has, therefore, acted wisely in yielding to solicitations from many quarters to work up the material at his disposal for publication. He has discharged his task with a full sense of the risks incurred. Posthumous works are so often unsatisfactory that it was quite reasonable that he should pause before adding to their number. In this instance, however, the Christian world has every reason to feel under deep obligations to the editor for deciding not to withhold the manuscript with which he had been entrusted, and for having done his part with so much tact and self-effacement. Probably no other scholar would have been so punctiliously faithful to his trust, and there is certainly none who would have been more sympathetic, for Professor Kittel stands nearer to Dillmann than does perhaps any other living German professor. Of course lectures intended in the first instance for oral teaching could not be prepared for the press without many alterations. Much has been omitted, especially in the part treating of individual doctrines. Clauses have been transposed, and many finishing touches have been added. There has consequently been considerable room for the intrusion of editorial subjectivity, a certain amount of which was inevitable under the circumstances; but there is no reason to doubt the substantial correspondence of the book with what the author himself would have issued. It goes without saying that palpable errors have been removed. Personalities have also been judiciously eliminated.

After a short introduction the subject is handled under three heads. The

nature and character of the religion of the Old Testament are first defined. Then its course from its anticipations in the times of the patriarchs to the advent of Christianity is carefully traced. Last its doctrines are successively examined. In other words the three divisions may be accurately described as: (1) general survey; (2) history; (3) systematic theology. This method which is essentially different from that followed by Smend and others claims (and with considerable justice) to be economical of the reader's time and at ention, and to be logical in its order.

The distinctive idea of the work as contrasted with the writings of the Vatke-Kuenen-Wellhausen school is the supernatural origin of the religion of the Old Testament. Whilst fully in accord with modern ideas on many points, for example, the origin of the Pentateuch (for whilst differing as to the date of the Priestly Code Dillmann was in substantial agreement with most recent critics as to the composite character of the so-called Books of Moses), and many of the narratives in the historical books, such as the accounts of the crossing of Jordan by the Israelites and the fall of Jericho which, he maintains, would be grievously misunderstood if taken literally, he contends with great earnestness and eloquence that the religion of ancient Israel can only be accounted for by direct revelation. It is quite impossible, in his opinion, to explain it in any other way. It was not derived from any earlier religious system, Chaldean, for instance, or Egyptian. It was not slowly developed from a faith differing very little from the faiths of the nations round. It cannot be ascribed to the special capacities of the Semitic race, for while the latter may have made the Israelites more receptive, they could not have originated a religion differing from other religions in its historical origin, in its conception of God, which was neither polytheistic, nor dualistic, nor pantheistic, in its missionary spirit, and in its reference of worship to the sanctification of the worshiper. The last point, the peculiar ethical character of the religion of the Old Testament, is strongly emphasized. The hypothesis of gradual development which has been so attractively presented by Smend, who, however, only moves on the lines of Wellhausen, is met with the following objections. If it is asked how laws like Exodus chapters 20-23 can have been the deposit left by the oral Toroth of the priests of many Israelitish sanctuaries during the first four to six centuries of the sojourn in Canaan unless these priests had a common standard to direct them; there is no answer. If it is further asked where Israel's victorious energy in the time of the Conquest and the age of David came from if its religion was not superior to that of those whom it conquered; there is again no answer. The assertion that the change from the older Jahvism to ethical monotheism was occasioned by the pressure of the Syrian wars after Elisha and still more by the Assyrian advance is characterized as topsy-turvey. If the national disasters of the Babylonian time were able to exert so strong a developing influence on religion why did they actually exert it only on Israel? Why not

also on Ammon, Moab, Edom, the Philistines, the Phœnicians, the Syrians ? So far from these national disasters producing the higher ethical conception of God they were accompanied by a more pronounced revolt from Jehovah and a more signal relapse into pagan forms of worship. Dr. James Robertson's *Early Religion of Israel* is recommended as "hitting the nail on the head," although it appeared before the work of Smend referred to.

The relation of the Old Testament religion to Christianity and the nature and sphere of revelation are also discussed with great force and freshness. The religion of the New Testament and that of the Old have the same foundation. The difference lies in degree, not in kind. The one represents a lower stage of development, the other a higher. What is contained in the one only in germ is brought to maturity in the other. Revelation as exhibited in the Bible is God's progressive disclosure of his character and will. It deals only with religion. It has nothing to do with historical or scientific research. And it has long ceased. It belonged to antiquity and to it alone. Later teachers may be religious heroes but they are not revealers. Their acquaintance with revelation is secondary not primary.

The historical portion which fills 128 pages is full of interest and suggestiveness. The monotheism of the Israelites and the polytheism of the other Terahites are accounted for on the supposition that in the age of Abraham (who must be thought of as a real person) polytheism was not so far developed in his family that the monotheistic consciousness had quite disappeared, and his superiority consisted in his simpler, purer religious thought, and in the way in which he allowed it to be fostered by experience. There was a stage in early religious life, contends our author, in which the two conceptions of God as one and as many lay side by side without any decision in favor of the one or the other. From this point of indifference there might be a positive movement either towards monotheism or towards polytheism. Such a point was reached among the Terahites at the time referred to. Through Abraham's influence part decided for monotheism and thus became capable of receiving the progressive revelation of the divine character and will which we find recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. The sojourn in Egypt, the exodus, the giving of the law in the wilderness, and the occupation of Canaan are regarded as historical events the accounts of which in the Hexateuch, although written long afterwards and therefore traditional, and also decorated with many ideal touches, rest, as to their main substance, on accurate reminiscences. Very little room is conceded to Egyptian influence on the religion of the Old Testament. Much which has been ascribed to Egypt is really of Semitic origin; and a sharper contrast to the system of caste which prevailed in the valley of the Nile cannot be found than is suggested by the words: "Ye shall be to me a kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6). The title of the Israelites to Canaan, the significance of the period of the Judges, the character of David, the reasons for the fall of the northern kingdom and the relative permanence

of the southern one, the meaning of the exile in Jehovah's education of his people, the special task of the restored community, and the wrong paths into which Judaism wandered during the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era are the points to which attention is mainly directed. Space admits of only one quotation out of a large number of tempting passages: "Had Christ come in the sixth century he would have been misunderstood and his work would have ended in failure. All would have rejected him with perhaps the sole exception of the one who entered most deeply in anticipation into his character and work, the prophet of Isaiah 41-53, and 61. As at the present day the gospel produces no fruit in the life of the individual where the law has not previously done its work, so also in the life of the people of revelation the law must exert its full influence before Christ could be welcomed as a Saviour."

The last and longest portion, in which the theology of the Old Testament is dissected into its component parts, is not less interesting and fruitful. There is perhaps a little want of clearness in some places, for instance in the discussion of the first sin and in the chapter on angels, but in the main the treatment is admirable. There are indeed details which are open to question, but the accuracy of the representation as a whole (from Dillmann's point of view) will be generally admitted.

The erudition displayed throughout the work is worthy of the author's standing. If a criticism may be hazarded, Assyriology has hardly received sufficient attention. No notice, for example, is taken of the curious parallel in some of the Tel-el-Amarna tablets to the use of *Elohim* in the Hebrew Bible. Still this is a small drawback. The book is wonderfully learned, thoughtful, and devout, and will heighten Dillmann's reputation as a Christian and a theologian without lowering it as a scholar.

W. TAYLOR SMITH.

The Wise Men of Ancient Israel and their Proverbs. By CHARLES FOSTER KENT, Brown University. Boston: Silver, Burdette & Co., 1895. Pp. 208. 8vo. Cloth, \$1.00.

Of the three divisions of Old Testament literature, that of the Sages is probably least known and least appreciated. At the same time it is true that in most respects the literature of the Sages is of more practical value today than any other portion of the Old Testament. A large amount of this lack of appreciation is due to the fact that this literature has not been made to stand out by itself. What is true of the Sage literature in general is especially true of the book of Proverbs. While some may find pleasure in reading the book, the majority of readers care nothing for it, because it is deficient in scientific arrangement, or, if one may say it, in order of any kind. A real service of high character has been performed by Professor Kent in his effort to